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Romanian - American Negotiations

IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE, AND ARTS

Presa Universitară Clujeană

Romanian-American Negotiations in Education, Science, Culture, and Arts

Cornel Sigmirean • Sonia D. Andraș • Roxana Mihaly
(Editors)

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Interwar Romanian Fashion and Beauty in American *Vogue*[*]

Sonia D. Andraș

This chapter analyzes the representation of Romanian women perceived as *Parisiennes* in the American edition of *Vogue*. It belongs to my larger research on the evolution of Romanian women's identity discourse by analyzing their fashion choices and ideas. While similar subjects on the connection between fashion magazines and foreign style icons have gained impetus in recent years, Romania and its representation remain marginal.

Since its inception, *Vogue* was heavily edited to suit the needs and exigencies of its target readership, elite Americans. The Romania they saw and read about was an ideal, faraway place. Romanian fashion was most visible in the 1920s on the magazine's pages and slowly faded to references, from *en vogue* to *en fog*. I will focus on three main symbolic characters, standing for Modern Royalty with Queen Marie of Romania, Olden Royalty with Princess Marthe Bibesco, and Burlesque Royalty with comedy actress Alice Cocéa. Cocéa's representation can also link to the American appetite for Balkan drama, as seen with the comprehensive coverage of her romantic exploits throughout the European and American press. Interwar glossies like *Vogue* sold the dream of embodying the fashion icons presented on its pages, including Romanian *Parisiennes*, either through the right purchase or suggesting that "hope could perhaps be found in a jar."[1]

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[*] This chapter was supported by the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding-UEFISCDI, the National Research Council – CNCS, the Ministry of Education (Romania), Project PN-III-P4-PCE-2021–0688, Contract 29 from 27 May 2022, title *The Ethos of Dialogue and Education: Romanian-American Cultural Negotiations (1920–1940).*

[1] Elizabeth Wissinger, *This Year's Model: Fashion, Media, and the Making of Glamour* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2015), 90–91.

I use Lisa R. Lattuca's methodological model of informed disciplinarity,[2] focusing on the type of research question asked rather than on an evaluative or hierarchical method. In the context of this study, the main field is fashion studies, which needs outreach to other fields, including cultural and social histories, cultural studies (gender, media, urban studies), or semiotics. The subject adds Romanian women's representation in American glossy fashion magazines. It offers new insights into women's fashion through a comparative, interdisciplinary, and multi-perspective original approach, introducing Romania as a legitimate fashion space and Romanian women as international fashion icons, termed as "modern girls" for the 1920s boyish, emancipated flapper/ *garçonne* and as "new women" for their more mature, feminine, and maternal 1930s evolution.

In a Romanian context, the "new woman" was reframed to fit post-1948, Communist Soviet, and later national-Communist standards of femininity. Considering the connection between "traditional anthropologic subjects" and the approaches used in fashion studies on analyzing publishing within the larger system and its practices and significations,[3] *Vogue* or its long-term rival, *Harper's Bazaar*, reflect and affect identities on a social, economic, cultural, and psychological level. Its unprecedented influence over the language of fashion over the twentieth century and "significantly underpinned the modern idea of fashion as a global phenomenon," widening the scope of America's commercial networks.[4] I integrate its material and symbolic meanings into a historical, geographical, cultural, social, aesthetic, and ideological context applied to both the United States and Romania's reflection as depicted and understood by the American fashion press and the public. Parisian-Romanian fashion icons in *Vogue* become advice literature agents directing the reader's

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[2] Lisa R. Lattuca, "Creating Interdisciplinarity: Grounded Definitions from College and University Faculty," *History of Intellectual Culture* 3, no. 1 (2003): (1–20), 5–6.

[3] Helen Kopnina, "The World According to Vogue: The Role of Culture(s) in International Fashion Magazines," *Dialectical Anthropology* 31, no. 4 (December 2007): (363–81), 364, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10624–007–9030–9.

[4] Christopher Breward, *Fashion* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 122.

behavior, appearance, and identity.[5] Publications like *Vogue* brought together inaccessible items alongside related advertisements, with Avant Garde art to the wider reading public.[6] Nevertheless, as Malcolm Barnard asserted, fashion communication cannot be expressed through a simple sender/receiver explanation. It can instead introduce clothes and accessories as prostheses within a semiological communication model. As Barnard explained, any added or contradictory messaging added to clothes can be, at best, perceived as noise in the transmission, challenging the assumption that garments inherently transmit subliminal messages.[7]

Similarly, dress in modernity was an identity expression tool rather than a signal of differentiation.[8] It is also true that fashion has been borne out of the realms of luxury, and they continue to be deeply linked.[9] *Vogue*'s core identity relates to fashion discourse as dialogue between affluent, style-conscious women and fashion editors. Romanian women in *Vogue* expressed themselves or were made to talk through their fashions. Still, as Alison Matthews David contended, despite its French-sounding name and fashion-centric focus, *Vogue*'s birth was an "inherently American cultural phenomenon."[10] The magazine maintained its exclusive ties to Europe's social and economic elites embracing a "new nationalism," informed by "more populist understandings of 'authentic' American taste and style in dress." Furthermore, as Christopher Breward asserted, *Vogue* imposed a visual aesthetic through its fashion illustrations and photographs "abstracted and

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[5] Grace Lees-Maffei, "From Service to Self-Service: Advice Literature as Design Discourse, 1920 1970," *Journal of Design History* 14, no. 3 (January 1, 2001): 187–206, https://doi.org/10.1093/jdh/14.3.187.

[6] Véronique Pouillard, "FASHION FOR ALL? The Transatlantic Fashion Business and the Development of a Popular Press Culture During the Interwar Period," *Journalism Studies* 14, no. 5 (October 2013): (716–29), 727, https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2013.810907.

[7] Malcolm Barnard, "Fashion as Communication Revisited," *Popular Communication* 18, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): (259–71), 268–9, https://doi.org/10.1080/15405702.2020.1844888.

[8] Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, 2nd ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 120.

[9] Paula Von Wachenfeldt, "The Myth of Luxury in a Fashion World," *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture* 5, no. 3 (October 1, 2018): (313–28), 314, https://doi.org/10.1386/fspc.5.3.313_1.

[10] David, "Vogue's New World," 13.

fetishized the surfaces of fashionable life," defining the magazine's identity throughout its history and international spread[11]. Indeed, it was the first of its kind to use photography as "norm rather than the exception."[12]

As modernity's consumerist culture grew throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries, artistic establishments like galleries or museums began adopting "some characteristics of the commercial space, as well as marketing strategies."[13] Fashion studies encompass this evolution through an interdisciplinary, transnational approach, constantly negotiating between art and technology, theory and practice, creativity and imitation, colonialism and multiculturalism. As a scholarly field, it acknowledges fashion as transitory and eternal, where "excess and austerity are two sides of the same coin."[14] This is relevant as not all historical accounts of glossy fashion magazines, including *Vogue*, emphasize the broader context of geography, culture, or commerce.[15] As demonstrated here, *Vogue* even placed both on the same page. Within modernity's mutually-profitable symbiosis between fashion and journalism, exclusive fashion glossy magazines, especially *Vogue*, blend the need for social disruption and selling products.[16] Despite its American identity, *Vogue* viewed Paris as the heart of fashion. With competition from non-Parisian fashion capitals aside, the *esprit parisien* promised innovation and transformation[17], driving the world's imagination. Its female embodiment is *la Parisienne*, as a marker of the French capital's

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[11] Breward, *Fashion*, 122–123.

[12] Valerie Cumming, C. Willett Cunnington, and Phillis Cunnington, *The Dictionary of Fashion History* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2010), 156.

[13] Gloria Jiménez-Marín, Irene González-Ariza, and Elena Bellido-Pérez, "Historical *Vogue* Covers as a Space for the Relationship Between Art and Advertising Through Fashion," *Revista Internacional de Historia de La Comunicación*, no. 17 (2021): (104–34), 106, https://doi.org/10.12795/RiCH.2021.i17.06.

[14] Jessica Burstein, "The September Issue: Excess and Austerity in Fashion," *Modernism/Modernity* 23, no. 1 (February 17, 2016): (219–31), 220, https://doi.org/10.1353/mod.2016.0014.

[15] Kate Best, *The History of Fashion Journalism* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 13.

[16] Ibid, 6.

[17] Agnès Rocamora, "Paris, Capitale de La Mode: Representing the Fashion City in the Media," in *Fashion's World Cities*, ed. Christopher Breward and David Gilbert (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2006), (43–54), 45.

aesthetic and cultural spirit.[18] While she is a symbol and not necessarily French, the *Parisienne* and her "effortless French street style," coupled with a necessary proximity to Parisian couture houses, prompted Condé Montrose Nast to push for a *Vogue* French edition.

But before Condé Nast, there was Arthur Baldwin Turnure. On the other side of the ocean in New York, Turnure founded *Vogue* as a weekly elite newspaper in 1892. Condé Nast purchased it in 1909, beginning *Vogue*'s evolution as a fashion magazine. The editor-in-chief was Edna Woolman Chase,[19] credited for America's first catwalk in 1914, "extending into the audience to afford a good view of the clothes."[20] Chase's trailblazing event offered the first proof that "fashion did not need to be French." American creators were not compelled to copy Parisian models and "could step forward and develop their own style."[21] This realization did not fully manifest until much later, again under belligerent conditions, after World War Two. Still, *Vogue* alluded to French fashionability and refined cultural landscapes, adding to its older maritime connotations.[22]

Weaving an Overture

While *Vogue* was among the markers of gendered aesthetic, cultural, social, and ideological radical shifts or late-nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century modernity, it maintained a "largely conservative stance."[23] Even before Greater Romania and like today, elites were commonly presented during events, especially weddings. In May 1907, *Vogue* declared Princess Marie of Romania the most beautiful "of all the princesses of Europe," coupled with "that rare quality, charm" with an "understanding of line"

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[18] Ibid, 51.

[19] Editor-in-chief between 1914 and 1952, over *Vogue* and its foreign editions, British *Vogue* in 1916 and *Vogue Paris* in 1920.

[20] Wissinger, *This Year's Model*, 69.

[21] Nina-Sophia Miralles, *Glossy: The Inside Story of Vogue* (London: Quercus Editions, 2021), 49–50.

[22] David, "Vogue's New World," 15.

[23] Ibid, 14.

from a powerful artistic sense. She not only blended in any environment but attracted attention as "the most beautiful and interesting figure." Motherhood made "this English Princess, transplanted into this far-off Balkan State" worthy of reverence from her "proud and fortunate subjects."[24] An advertisement for *Vogue*'s 1910 winter fashions number listed an article titled *Marriageable Princesses of Europe*, which included Princess Elisabeth of Romania[25], later Queen Elisabeth of Greece.

Romania's crucial moments, like the very making of Greater Romania, could also appear, filtered through the lens of *Vogue*. In the summer of 1919, fashion journalist Jeanne Ramon Fernandez reported for the American magazine about Queen Marie's visit to Paris as days "brilliantly filled with entertainment" and "fresh assurances of peace," along with "the returned frock coat." Fernandez asserted that Queen Marie dominated the Parisian elite circles for a week. Besides visiting her friends in the Parisian high society, the Paris Press Syndicate organized a matinée at the Opera, dedicated a box to Queen Marie, her daughters, and "the ladies of her suite."[26] (Fig 2) The third and fourth pages were divided in half with ads. On the third, a whole-page ad for *Bonnie,* an "imported human hair net" for "fascinating French coiffures," was placed next to illustrations of Princess Murat and another outfit worn by the Countess of Beaumont.[27] The article's ending occupied the right half, while on the left, the whole-page advertisement encouraged readers to dress their young sons in *Kaynee* blouses. The magazine included a full-page photo of then-Queen Marie by English portrait photographer Bertram Park for the International Film Service a month later. The Queen posed in a semi-profile, wearing an elaborate cocktail round hat with a long veil, a fur coat on one shoulder over a dark, simple gown, and a pearl necklace. The caption explained that Queen Marie left a "glowing

[24] "A Charming Princess and Her Family," *Vogue*, May 2, 1907, (722–3), 722.
[25] "The Winter Fashions Number," *Vogue*, October 15, 1910, 100.
[26] Jeanne R. Fernandez, "Paris Knows the Royal Way to Entertain a Queen," *Vogue*, June 15, 1919, (36–37, 84, 86), 36.
[27] Ibid, 84.

impression" in London and Paris as "one of the loveliest and most beloved figures in Paris." The text also announced an upcoming American visit alongside Princess Elisabeth.[28] On the next page, *Vogue* presented the informal-yet-*haute couture* Parisian leisurewear as the French capital took "its summer in a sportive way," also authored by Fernandez.[29]

The Romanian 'Modern Girl' in the Land of the Flapper

By the 1920s, *Vogue* shifted its attention toward American creative enterprises and individuals. The globalized industry selling fashioned ephemeral illusions, with *Vogue* as principal mouthpiece for the American elite, was beginning to change in conjunction with modernity, capitalism, and consumerism. While Condé Nast embraced the full benefits of copyright law, *Vogue*'s editorship reluctantly accepted that fashionable young American women were no longer compelled to travel to Paris as an "obligatory rite of passage," which eventually led to preferences for sports or easy-to-reproduce styles. The 1920s began the dissolution of class or ethnicity differences, challenging early *Vogue*'s core philosophy.[30] This strategy was in line with the general feeling of the decade regarding women in America. It propagated worldwide through Hollywood and, as in the case of this research, *Vogue* and its international editions. The proverbial flapper was understood as the ultimate consumer, with an instilled philosophy of consumption. She was to look her best and to do that, she was directed toward the best quality in products and designs she could afford.[31] Starting Romania's most visible era *en Vogue*, a February 1920 article claimed that the *House of Rodier* succeeded in its industrial reconstruction and offered "the loveliest of spring textiles." The Rodier collection promoted what the magazine's editor called "a new Orientalism in the mode." As seen here, categories marked as outside, including the Other, exotic, or Oriental, are

[28] "H. M. the Queen of Roumania," *Vogue*, July 15, 1919, 26.
[29] Fernandez, "Paris Takes Its Summer in a Sporting Way," *Vogue*, July 15, 1919, 27–30, 87.
[30] David, "*Vogue*'s New World," 32.
[31] Lucy Moore, *Anything Goes: A Biography of the Roaring Twenties* (London: Atlantic Books, 2009), 70.

common in fashion advertising, with *Vogue* at the forefront, as "good selling points in the global market."[32] Rodier's designs were informed by North African, Romanian, Serbian, and "Near East" designs. "A detail from a galoon sleeve "in bright red cotton blocked in blue and white" was a "primitive touch of colour borrowed from a Romanian peasant's costume." As an ideal athleticwear, it featured Romanian *crêpe* "widely patterned in deep rich colours."[33] A bright-colored galloon patterned in red and black, white, or "blue and white against red" could work just like a Romanian folk costume embroidery.[34] Six years later, a full-page *Wilkins & Adler* advertisement presented a model sitting on travel trunks next to a world map, wearing *a Golflex* frock in an "exclusive new fabric – with 'Romanian' embroidery."[35]

At the dawn of 1921, *Vogue* included an advertisement for Eleanor Adair's new American cosmetic clinic fashioned as a letter to current and potential clients. Adair explained that the US first received her eighteen years before great success, alongside her "salons in London, Paris, and agencies in Bucharest, Australia, and the Orient," all frequented by beautiful, high-status women[36]. By spring, the magazine published an entire-page portrait of Elizabeth Bibesco taken by Baron de Meyer. She was pictured wearing a simplified *fin-de-siècle*-style ball gown, her hair bob-like, secured with a fine bandana and a fur mantle. While not Romanian by birth, Princess Bibesco, née Asquith, participated alongside her husband, Prince Antoine Bibesco, in personal activities and official functions in Romania's interest[37]. The magazine offered a detailed illustrated presentation of the couturier and art collector Jacques Doucet's latest creations on the next page.

In February 1922, *Vogue* published another portrait of Princess Elizabeth Bibesco, a closeup by E.O. Hoppe. Her attire was reminiscent of earlier styles, with a chignon secured with a nature-themed fabric coronet, a thin pearl

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[32] Kopnina, "The World According to Vogue," 366.
[33] "French Fabrics 'Come Back' in Oriental Mood," *Vogue*, February 1, 1920, (45, 140, 142), 45.
[34] Ibid, 142.
[35] "Wilkin & Adler Ad," *Vogue*, January 15, 1927, 9.
[36] Eleonor Adair, "Mrs. Adair's Message to the American Women," *Vogue*, January 1, 1921, 90.
[37] "Princesse Bibesco," *Vogue*, April 15, 1921, 24.

necklace, and what appears to be a sheer blouse over a simple gown. The caption was slightly updated from the previous year to mention her latest book, *I Have Only Myself to Blame*, a collection of short stories and "subject of much discussion."[38] The following article by *Vogue* editor and author Marjorie Hillis[39] on patterned fabrics in fashion. The issue featured an illustrated spread of "gowns which the Parisienne is wearing now." As the bolded subtitle explained, "a discerning eye may catch hints of those which will be worn in the coming spring." Among the notable examples or unnamed couture designs, theatre and cinema actress of Romanian heritage, Alice Cocéa was pictured in a Callot Soeurs "unusual combination of black and navy blue satin." The bodice was made of blue satin with green silk embroidery, while the black skirt had "long stands of green silk," accessorized with a short likely-pearl necklace, several bangles on her left hand, and simple pumps.[40] Cocéa's representation gives an "Oriental" overall impression, more like a Chanel little black dress than a Poiret exotic extravaganza. Cocéa appeared two weeks later in a spread on predictions for "coming fashions" from the latest French theatre plays because "an important part in the creation of modes is conceded to the Paris stage." She is separated by a thin line between the other illustrations, in a sheer gown from Callot made of "finely pleated lemon yellow chiffon and gold lace, with touches of black" with "immense" sleeves she wore while playing Denise in the musical comedy *Dédé* by Henri Christiné and Albert Willemetz.[41] For interwar *Vogue*, France was still interchangeable with Paris. (Fig. 9)

In September 1922, *Vogue* published a full-page illustrated report on the wedding between Queen Maris's daughter, Princess Marie of Romania and King Alexander of Yugoslavia as an event "of world-wide interest." Her wedding gown was described as a "white georgette crêpe embroidered with pearls and strass." One illustration showed the newlywed couple exiting

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[38] "Princesse Bibesco," *Vogue*, February 1, 1922.
[39] Marjorie Hillis, "The Surface View of the Mode," *Vogue*, February 1, 1922, 27–29.
[40] "Gowns That the Parisienne Is Wearing," *Vogue*, February 1, 1922, 35.
[41] "Predictions of Coming Fashions," *Vogue*, February 15, 1922, 61.

"the Cathedral at Belgrade" towards the carriage notes that her court mantle included the Serbian and Romanian coat of arms embroideries. The article concluded that her silver cloth mantle had silver motifs and rhinestones, while her "superb mantle" measured five yards long. The black-and-white illustration showed the Princess leaning or sitting with her head turned to the side while gazing towards the upper right corner. She appears to be wearing a vaporous, translucent gown with dark, long feathers. She wore no jewelry except for two wide bracelets and a large ring, likely with diamonds. Her hair seems tied at the back with a curl on the side[42]. (Fig. 1)

Queen Marie's fashion and beauty icon fame made her name a powerful promotion tool. In its vividly illustrated whole-page ads, *Houbigant Paris* used European royal female names as a promotion tool, proving that their brand had been used since Marie Antoinette. (Fig. 3) In its 1922 listing, Queen Marie was listed on top.[43] The 1923 change of perspective towards America was still not all-encompassing, especially connected to Romania and its fashion icons perceived as *Parisiennes*, in this context, Queen Marie, Marthe Bibesco, and Alice Cocéa. In the summer of 1924, Queen Marie posed in medieval-inspired attire, complete with a dark, full-length veil over a white gown. The veil was secured with a pearl-laden tiara and two pearl necklaces, one on her head and under the chin. She wore darker lipstick and no other visible accessories except for pearls. The caption clarified that the photograph was taken at a spring ball at the seventeenth-century Palazzo Barberini in Rome, hosted by Donna Viviana di Sangro.[44] Next to the illustrated page, an article by the "visiting Frenchwoman" Jeanne Ramon Fernandez described the fashionable Italian elites on the backdrop of Rome's antique legacy.[45]

The name Bibesco frequently appeared alongside regular references to the Romanian Royals. For instance, an illustrated outline of the latest

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[42] "A Royal Marriage of World-Wide Interest," *Vogue*, September 15, 1922, 72.

[43] "Houbigant Paris Ad," *Vogue*, December 1, 1922, 16D. "Houbigant Paris Ad," *Vogue*, December 1, 1923, 16B.

[44] "H. M. the Queen of Roumania," *Vogue*, June 15, 1924, 30.

[45] Jeanne Ramon Fernandez, "Gala-Days in the Eternal City," *Vogue*, June 15, 1924, 31–36.

Reboux hat models worn by aristocratic women shows "the Princess Bibesco" donning a "picturesque violet felt hat." The caption does not offer more details about *which* Princess Bibesco it portrays, but it likely refers to Marthe Bibesco. The hat is described as reminiscent of the Second Empire, only trimmed with purple velvet wide bands and two bows. The text explains that its color choice represented "most of its chic."[46] In the summer of 1925, *Vogue* published a richly illustrated essay written by Marthe Bibesco, titled *My Roumania*, focusing on two of her favorite Romanian spots, Mogoșoaia "on the plains" and Posada "on the hills." According to the article, Bibesco was "well known as an author in French circles," noting that her book *The Eight Paradises*[47] received a commendation from the French Academy.[48] In one of the images, Bibesco posed romantically in a canoe on a lake alongside her daughter, Valentine, in comfortable but elegant clothing, Marcel waves, and discreet makeup among water lilies.[49] The last page included an advertisement for *Whiting-Cook Fine Stationery*, "the finest paper that can be made."[50] (Fig. 7) By the end of the year, Queen Marie, too, appeared. A whole-page *Pond's* advertisement, like *Houbigant*, listed her first among those offering an "unqualified approval."[51] A year later, *Vogue* included an article about her favorite Romanian spots, authored by Viola M. Jones.[52] In 1928, an article titled "Roumania, the Colourful" featured an image of Queen Marie in a stylized Romanian folk costume as the epitome of the Romanian spirit.[53] (Fig. 5) However, *Pond's* honored her again in April, who dedicated an entire full-page advertisement to her as "the most beautiful Queen of Europe," attesting to the brand's efficacy.[54] (Fig. 4)The mid-December 1926 issue presented the Queen's chic and regal wardrobe with personalized models

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[46] "Chapeaux," *Vogue*, October 1, 1924, (54–57), 56.
[47] Originally in French as *Les huit Paradis*, published by Hachette et Cie in 1908.
[48] Marthe Bibesco, "My Roumania," *Vogue*, June 15, 1925, (65–67, 96), 65.
[49] Ibid, 67.
[50] "Whiting-Cook Fine Stationery Ad," *Vogue*, June 15, 1925, 96.
[51] "*Pond's* Ad," *Vogue*, December 15, 1925, 99.
[52] Viola M. Jones, "Queen Marie's Playhouse," *Vogue*, November 15, 1926, 166.
[53] "Roumania the Colourful," *Vogue*, March 15, 1928, (194, 196) 194.
[54] "*Pond's* Ad," *Vogue*, April 15, 1925, 132A.

by Jean Patou.[55] (Fig. 6) A similar illustrated piece appeared in the summer of 1924 with Lucien Lelong designs.[56]

Meanwhile, New Yorkers continued to see advertisements for French products across the ocean. Illustrated full-page advertisements for *Parfums D'Orsay Pars* published throughout 1926 featured Bucharest among continental branches[57]. A Parisian fashion report by Jeanne Ramon Fernandez again presented an unidentified "Princesse Bibesco." As the caption explains, her Vionnet outfit used when receiving guests for tea consisted of a black alpacca frock, tightly fitted at the hips, with a white *crêpe de chine* front which "fashions an immense fichu" secured with a pearl and diamonds Persian brooch.[58] Another mention of "Princesse Bibesco" came in February 1928, likely Marthe Bibesco, with a one-page article written by the Princess next to one of her famous photographic portraits from a series taken by Berenice Abbott in Paris.[59] In all the photographs taken during this photoshoot, Bibesco wore a simple black dress with long sleeves with a small V-shaped décolletage, a thin, likely diamond bracelet, a scarf tied across the neck, a large flower brooch pinned on the chest, long earrings with a larger precious stone at the bottom, and a simple black cloche covering all her hair. The caption framed her as "one of the distinguished women writers of to-day" well known for *Isvor* and *The Green Parrot*, alongside "the new 'Catherine-Paris." It then mentioned her husband, Prince Bibesco, "the head of the Bibesco family," and that the following page featured an article authored by the Princess,[60] (Fig. 8) titled *The Lure of the Other Woman's Gown*. (Fig. 7) It first appeared in French within a series published in *Vogue Paris* monthly throughout 1927 by the Princess.[61] The twelve articles, alongside unpublished essays, were collected in a volume titled *Noblesse de Robe,* published in

[55] "The Wardrobe of a Queen," *Vogue*, December 15, 1926, (52–53), 52.
[56] "The Wardrobe of Her Majesty Queen Marie of Roumania," *Vogue*, August 15, 1924, 39.
[57] "Parfums D'Orsay Ads," *Vogue*, 1926, September 1, 111; October 1, 141; December 1, 135.
[58] Jeanne Ramon Fernandez, "Paris: Summer, 1926," *Vogue*, June 1, 1926, (52–56, 134), 56.
[59] Currently at the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown.
[60] "Princesse Bibesco," *Vogue*, February 1, 1928, 68.
[61] Bibesco, "Odette ou la robe d'autrui ne désireras," *Vogue Paris*, October 1, 1927, 33.

1928.[62] Neither the image caption nor the English translation published in the American edition mentioned the French series or the book, despite its intrinsic connection to *Vogue*'s essence. By the decade's end, the nine-year-old French *Vogue* gained editorial autonomy[63]. However, forty-four days after Black Thursday, a full-page advertisement for *Parfums Rallet* showcased its No. 1 and No. 3 perfume bottles sold in five sizes, with prices ranging from 3.50 to 22.50 dollars, and powder boxes in three colors, all sold for three dollars[64]. Conversely, the most expensive bottle amounted to almost seven percent of the average total expenditures per family estimated for 1929.[65] Just as *Houbigant* had done in the decade's early years, *Rallet* mentioned the brand was by appointment of Royal and Imperial Houses worldwide, beginning with Romania.[66] (Fig. 3)

'New Women' on Both Sides of the Atlantic

The 1930s witnessed the diverging philosophical directions between *Vogue*'s American and French editions. As Sophie Kurkdjian observed, since the latter gained its independence, it diverged from the New York-imposed commercial focus towards constructing an idealized, artistic image of the *Parisienne*. Unlike the more obedient British *Vogue*, the autonomy exercised by *Vogue* Paris editor-in-chief Michel de Brunhoff led to a "fundamental, but largely unrecognized, conflict between two editorial teams."[67] The Paris-through-Bucharest route still appealed to American *Vogue*. In the early 1930s, Alice Cocéa, in her "blonde evening satin" at the Gymnase, was a staple of Parisian life, part of its unchanging events and characters, as reported in

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[62] Idem, *Noblesse de robe* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1928), 117–26.

[63] Sophie Kurkdjian, "The Emergence of French *Vogue*: French Identity and Visual Culture in the Fashion Press, 1920–40," *International Journal of Fashion Studies* 6, no. 1 (April 1, 2019): (63–82), 64, https://doi.org/10.1386/infs.6.1.63_1.

[64] Around $62 to $399 and respectively $53 in 2023.

[65] United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *How American Buying Habits Change* (U.S. Department of Labor, 1959), 226.

[66] "Parfums Rallet Ad," *Vogue*, December 7, 1929, 139.

[67] Kurkdjian, "The Emergence of French Vogue," 64–65.

January 1932 by fashion editor Solange D'Ayen.[68] A month later, one of the illustrated fashion pages as an ink sketch, titled *Interest at the Décolletage,* included "Princesse Antoine Bibesco" sitting on a stool with her legs crossed, wearing a Worth "brilliant evening frock."[69] By summer, socialite feminist, activist, and diplomat Florence Jaffray Harriman presented the fashions of America's diplomats and politicians. Among them, *"Mme. Nano,"* the Romanian Legation Counselor's wife,[70] in an all-white outfit, wearing a kimono-type blouse with short square sleeves, a long flowing dress, and a white cartwheel accessorized with a darker ribbon visible through the hat's see-through material.[71] (Fig. 10)

In the spring of 1932, *Vogue* published another Marthe Bibesco-signed article on "democracy in dress." The Princess began her article with the story of her aunt, Princess Jeanne Bibesco, a Carmelite nun since fifteen, having "left the world" at a time when the women around her "were still wearing laces and crinolines." Due to political reasons, she was forced to leave the convent as a "political agent to Pope Leo XIII." During that time, Princess Jeanne stayed with the Bibescos in Paris, incidentally when Marthe Bibesco was "in deep mourning, wearing cloth and *crêpe anglais*, according to the old tradition," which her aunt ignored. She did react during a visit by Bibesco's cousin, Hélène, wearing "the usual elegance of the modern Parisian," which convinced Marthe Bibesco of "the revolution that had taken place in fashions." As Bibesco explained, Hélène wore a "delightful" Chanel jersey dress "of the most expensive simplicity." Princess Jeanne commented that Hélène's outfit was unfit for a Princesse, considering that, in her days, woolen dresses were only acceptable in mourning and jersey was "the uniform of the poor." This interaction catalyzed a revelation about the significant changes in women's fashion since the late-1800s, "not in a matter of line, voluminousness, and

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[68] Solange D'Ayen, "Vogue Points from Paris About Life and Clothes," *Vogue*, January 15, 1932, 51.

[69] "Interest at the Décolletage," *Vogue*, February 1, 1932, 36.

[70] Likely Romanian diplomat Frederic Nanu.

[71] Florence Jaffray Harriman, "Washington," *Vogue*, July 1, 1932, (23–25), 24.

pattern, but a profound difference in the actual material" comparable to the early-nineteenth-century revolutionary simplification in menswear. Early interwar women's fashion was equally democratized, meaning that even noble ladies could discard "feathers and furbelows" and maintain their "superiority." She attributed this change to "Mademoiselle Chanel," who convinced aristocrats they were "independent of their fineries."[72] Bibesco admitted she sometimes wondered whether simplicity, Chanel's invention, was not informed by a "deep-rooted and mischievous instinct of the plebeian" that could have driven her to impose jersey, "the restrained aesthetics of the poor" on the social and economic elites. She compared Chanel's method to the ancient Greeks, who could, as her father once remarked, make finer decorative pieces than elaborate Chinese ones in amethyst and jade. For Bibesco, the early-interwar zeitgeist generated a "hitherto undreamed of resemblance between the appearance of the woman of leisure and the woman who works." 1920s women became *flâneuses*, walking freely on the city streets, which is why, Bibesco believed, women's fashions have simplified to this degree. From a fashion journalism perspective, publications centered around Avant Garde or discriminatory aesthetic ideas are habitually consumed by larger entities in the field, like Condé Nast for *Vogue*, or as Kate Best put it, a "cycle of democratization following heightened discrimination." Bibesco's observations on jersey's evolution from the working class to Chanel-donning elites could be interpreted as replacing artistic disruption with worker's practical dress. Practicality and luxury are the extreme ends of the dress spectrum. Fashion, as presented in *Vogue*, tends to favor "luxury of superior fashion goods" as "distinctive and industry-supported expressions traditionally tied to the fashion seasons and collections."[73]

Another revolutionary fashion shift was through sport, which Bibesco defined as a "substitute for work." Such activities require materials and

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[72] Bibesco, "Democracy in Dress," *Vogue*, March 1, 1932, (76, 96, 98), 76.

[73] John Armitage and Joanne Roberts, "The Globalisation of Luxury Fashion: The Case of Gucci," *Luxury* 6, no. 3 (September 2, 2019): (227–46), 228, https://doi.org/10.1080/20511817.2021.1897268.

designs accounting for movement, the environment, and potential hazards. In her view, riding automobiles and planes also affected fashion as elements from the chauffeur or aviator "uniforms" have been adopted by stylish ladies. Bibesco asserted that the "extreme neatness" of democratic fashion saved it from vulgarity. Floating veils, tulle, and billowing wraps were no longer essential in women's outwear, especially considering the danger they could pose to the wearer. As Bibesco detailed, what she termed "Chanel's formula" consisted of the total rejection of ornaments, frills, and "nonsense." Her contemporary fashionable dresses seemed "so neat that they never seem to collect dust," but they gave no impression of permanence. The article occupied half of the page here, while an illustrated ad for Smart Sport filled the other half, knitted suits and dresses "created exclusively by" Cohen Bros. Corp in New York.[74] Bibesco asserted that the "new aesthetics" is based on two diverging possibilities that eventually lead to the same destination: the young and beautiful woman whose natural loveliness is undermined by ornaments and the older woman lacking beauty in dire need of "that Chanelesque simplicity that has now been reduced to a fine art." As the Princess concluded, Chanel guarded "the secret of nothing becoming something, and, in fact, the only possible thing," by doing that, she spread "democracy of dress" across the world. Yet, Bibesco quoted Chanel's resentment at being compared to great painters. While a painter's work "most shock to-day and be acclaimed in fifty years," Chanel's creations should be seen as enchanting "at once" and ridiculous within a year. The article conclusions occupied half of the page, while the other was another illustrated ad, this time for *Kiki* by Elizabeth Arden, a "solid silver case for loose powder" that was "so cunningly contrived that it holds a big puff and plenty of powder."[75]

The Princess appeared again in late 1934 as an example of culture, style, and pedigree in a *Vogue Eye's View of the Modes* report by writer and

[74] Bibesco, "Democracy in Dress," 92.
[75] Ibid, 98.

critic Marya Mannes, who was appalled by women's flagrant falsification of beauty despite admitting the practice has always been present. She offered a "horrid example of what happens to Oriental women who covet Occidental eyes," a "fad phenomenon" in Japan at the time. Mannes applauded the Japanese government's will to curtail "this defamation of their traditional beauty," achieved through cosmetic surgery. The author indicated examples published in the current issue to "see how it's done." Marthe Bibesco symbolized the "fine contradiction to this feminine falsity" as "one of the most brilliant women in Parisian society" and "a deft and sensitive writer." Mannes briefly presented her biography and contributions to the magazine. She announced Bibesco's subsequent first-time visit to New York and stated that, alongside the entire *Vogue* staff and readership, she eagerly awaited "her written reactions to this fabulous place."[76] (Fig. 8) The feedback came in January of the following year. Bibesco, now described as "a well-known European lady of letters and author of *Catherine-Paris*," recounted her impression of visiting New York for the first time.

From her first sentence, Bibesco clarified that the article was to be understood from a woman's perspective, as she declared that New York's air "lashes women, forcing them to walk erect" and look upwards at the tall buildings in a city that "emanates pride." She then narrowed the focus even more, stating that she referred to the women on the streets because those encountered in "drawing-rooms" were as common as "women you meet everywhere," namely Cannes in January, Paris in May, London in June, and Venice in September. Looking at the women perusing New York's streets, Bibesco marveled at their freedom as she observed New York's gendered segregation between uptown and downtown New York. Men assembled daily in the "penned up, quartered, inaccessible" downtown, while women occupied the upper town as *flâneuses*, walking the streets "freely, victoriously," just like warriors. In her view, women were bellicose, "armed from head to foot, hat triumphant, torso held high, conquering eye," gaining Bibesco's

[76] Marya Mannes, "Vogue's Eye View of the Mode," *Vogue*, November 1, 1934, 35.

admiration as they strode "magnificently up to the portals of the only victory that counts (if you believe the moralists) – victory over self." At lunch, the Princess observed that while she sat at a table in a "fashionable restaurant" alongside three men, fellow foreigners, no woman ate alone, and there were at least three at each table.

Bibesco contrasted European women's education, emphasizing self-doubt with the apparent American self-assertiveness. As she explained, for European women, beauty was directly proportional to the need to apologize, highlighting "their melancholy, their contrition, their heat-broken air," as opposed to the proud and unapologetic relationship to beauty in America. She believed the reason was youth, as New York's women's enchanting and heroic character is driven by the fact that they were "even younger this year than they were the year before," a process curtailed only through death. For Bibesco, New York women were worthy of the "beautiful name" given to stars by Egyptian priests, as "The Indefatigables" for their courage, "flaunting their gowns like banners." Contrary to expectations, Bibesco claimed that Americans emanated distinction, not vulgarity. She also applauded New York's elegance and sense of familiarity despite the architectural grandeur of the environment and sympathetic hotel and service staff.[77] (Fig. 7) She believed the reception girl's politeness, always adding "please" and "thank you" to the conversation, was important enough to mention in the article's concluding paragraph. As she explained, American women brought "hats, perfumes, and dresses" across the ocean. Unlike other European women, she returned to Europe with "visions" instead of stockings.[78]

In September 1938 and almost two months after Queen Marie's passing, *Vogue* published an article by Grand Duchess "Marie" Pavlovna about the Romanian Queen. As the caption explained, the text was already in the works when the news broke by "a melancholy coincidence." Among the few Americans who "knew the late Queen more intimately or had a more sympathetic understanding," the Grand Duchess was already aware of her

[77] Marthe Bibesco, "The Aura of New York," *Vogue*, January 15, 1935, (40, 88) 40.
[78] Ibid, 88.

friend's precarious physical and emotional state during her last visit to the Bran castle, the article's focus. Pavlovna dedicated a long paragraph to the Queen's preferences regarding tea gowns. She noted that Queen Marie designed her tea gowns, carefully choosing "beautiful fabrics – heavy, rich silks that fell into graceful pleats," especially "old brocades" or embroideries, and traveled without her favorite pieces. At least in terms of her tea gowns, the Grand Duchess pointed out the Queen did not shy away from vivid shades, namely "blues, reds, and oranges – colours that suited her complexion and hair that looked gay in her softly-lighted rooms."[79] While tea gowns do not necessarily classify as fashion items, this description can provide subtle personal clues about Queen Marie's preferences, which were rarely visible in her private or public functions as a British and then Romanian Royal Family member. Large advertisements for less glamorous products accompanied the second half, including a large top-to-bottom Northmont advertisement promising innovative silk stockings with *Precious* cosmetic oil sold for one dollar a pair[80], adjacent to Pavlovna's text about Queen Marie's biography and Bran's surroundings. The conclusion emphasizing the Queen's loneliness and tragic circumstances was next to a small advertisement for *Wear-Right* gloves "styled according to the new fashion themes" and *Pagan Charm*, a Schiaparelli-designed Formfit corset sold "at the better corset departments" to embody the model's essence, one who "must be free, radiating the pagan joy of living."[81] A month later, the federal minimum wage was enacted, starting at 0.25 dollars, compared to 7.25 dollars in 2009,[82] while white bread averaged 8.9 cents.[83] But *Vogue* readers were wealthy by design. But between

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[79] Maria Pavlovna, "Queen Marie of Roumania," *Vogue*, September 1, 1938, (72–73, 110–1), 72–73.

[80] Around $21.52 in 2023.

[81] Pavlovna, "Queen Marie," 110–1.

[82] Around $5.38 and $10.25 in 2023. Wage and Hour Division, "History of Federal Minimum Wage Rates Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, 1938–2009," *US Department of Labor Archives*, December 19, 2019, http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/history/chart.

[83] Around $1.94 in 2023. United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Retail Prices* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/003922687.

1933 and 1935, Americans could book luxury Mediterranean cruises, completed with "Vagabond Cruises" for "less than $5[84] a day by large freighters" to North African and European countries, including Romania.[85] Families who could afford them represented a less than nine percent bracket.[86] Bucharest was still a worthy mention in *Vogue*'s fashion and cosmetic advertisements. For instance, a 1936 ad for *Du Barry Beauty Preparations* by Richard Hudnut in Paris and New York included Bucharest among its international branches.[87] The same cities appeared a month later in another Richard Hudnut advertisement of the "Maytime magic of your salon-at-home."[88] (Fig. 11)

Tailored Impressions into the Future

American *Vogue* did not expect its source of everything elegance and fashion to be cut off as the 1940s began with World War Two becoming more and more of a reality. Just two months before the Nazi army occupied Paris, the magazine reported how joyous Paris was in the spring of 1940, with celebrated comedy actress of Romanian heritage Alice Cocéa having returned to Europe. As the subtitle explained, Paris laughed at her "playing a zany," while Reginald Beckwith entertained Londoners. Cocéa's importance for French theatre was solidified by the *Vogue* editor claiming it "becomes important again" with her return as a "gadfly wife" in Armand Salacrou's popular play *Histoire de Rire*, also aided by the new schedule, from seven to ten o'clock. The play was described as witty but "hard on women," as Cocéa's character is "an irritating, addle-pated wife with an active imagination and no bothersome inhibitions about the truth." Faithful to her heartbreaker vamp persona, Cocéa's role and performance functioned, according to the article, as proof that "behind each marriage there are a mistress and a lover." Compared to a "top New York production" in tempo, the play focused on

[84] Around $117 in 2023.
[85] American Export Lines Ads *Vogue*, March 1, 1933, 17h; March 15, 1935, 34.
[86] Daniel Starch, *The Income of the American Family* (New York, 1930), 20.
[87] "Du Barry Beauty Preparations Ad," *Vogue*, April 1, 1936, 4.
[88] "The Maytime Magic of Your Salon-at-Home," *Vogue*, May 1, 1936, 129.

character and dialogue comedy rather than the "French-farce plot, complicated and flaky as a croissant." The article was accompanied by two stills from the play, showing Cocéa in a black, long, frilled gown with puffed short sleeves. As accessories, she wore a necklace and thick bracelet, apparently decked with large, expensive jewelry, over an elegant updo or a simple hat with thin curls over the ears.[89] (Fig. 12)

World War Two curtailed the Paris-New York link, granting local creatives and brands more opportunities to access the elite American fashion circuit[90], including *Vogue*'s fashion and advertising pages. This development was unlike what had happened with *Vogue*'s direct connection to Paris during World War One, promptly reactivating their Parisian correspondents as soon as the important couture houses had reopened and promptly curtailing its support towards American creators.[91]

The five-year interruption of Parisian messaging between the Occupation and the end of World War Two generated a different attitude towards local and national fashion production and creativity from *Vogue*'s editorial management, with assurances that post-Liberation Parisian fashions would not affect the prominence of American design.[92] In the last months of the war and with *Vogue Paris* still under suspension, the American edition published two illustrations of the little black dress, or as it was termed in the captions and title, the "uncluttered black dress." As a product of "uncluttered" modernity, the black dress was described as among the look's "most dramatic settings," in one case a "bold" juxtaposition with an "advanced locomotive" model and a "serenely dimensional" placement next to *Fish* by Constantin

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[89] "Laughter in London and Paris Theatres," *Vogue*, April 15, 1940, (52–53), 53.

[90] Frédéric Godart, "The Power Structure of the Fashion Industry: Fashion Capitals, Globalization and Creativity," *International Journal of Fashion Studies* 1, no. 1 (April 1, 2014): (39–55), 41, https://doi.org/10.1386/infs.1.1.39_1.

[91] Best, *The History of Fashion Journalism*, 13.

[92] Sandra Stansbery Buckland, "The Fashion Worlds of Paris and the USA during World War Two: Competition, Contact and Business, 1939–45," in *Paris Fashion and World War Two: Global Diffusion and Nazi Control*, ed. Lou Taylor and Marie McLaughlin (London, New York, Oxford and New Delhi: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2020), (139–60), 154.

Brâncuși.[93] (Fig. 12) After the war, *Vogue* mentioned Romania mostly on commercial, tourist, or political grounds. In July 1947, three months after launching Dior's New Look,[94] the magazine's advertising section included a note about the Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe (CARE), listing Romania among recipients. As the announcement noted, one ten-dollar[95] donation ensured "21.6 pounds of foods (more than 40,000 calories)," two Army-surplus blankets with sewing tools, two pairs of heels, and soles. Beneficiaries could create one-hundred-percent wool "warm, durable clothing" "in three conservative popular colors" alongside accessories.[96] The announcement was next to two fashion advertisements, a Julep Belt of the Month and a Merry-Go-Round Peter Pan bra. On the upper left side, the same page contained a fragment of a three-page gourmet article by Hungarian-American journalist Illés Bródy with exotic recipes, including poultry, avocados, seafood, coconuts, or bananas.[97] The juxtaposition is striking in its contrast between the situation and needs in Europe and the American elite's luxurious lifestyle, just as fashion solidified its New Look.

Despite the social and political upheavals in the years following World War Two, the Bibesco name was still uttered in textual, visual, or marketing contexts. For instance, a September 1947 *Pond's* full-page advertisement no longer mentioned Queens and Empresses, instead listed Princess Priscilla Bibesco, the daughter of Antoine and Elizabeth Bibesco, the third among "some of the beautiful women of society who use *Pond's*."[98] Almost a year later, Marthe Bibesco was again pictured in an illustrated presentation of the 1948 Parisian social season at the Ritz fifteenth anniversary reception hosted by Marie-Louise Ritz.[99] (Fig. 12)

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[93] "Uncluttered Black Dresses," *Vogue*, January 1, 1945, 44–45.
[94] "Paris Spring Collections," *Vogue*, April 1, 1947, front cover.
[95] Around $136.04 in 2023.
[96] "CARE: Package Service for Europe," *Vogue*, July 1, 1947, 85.
[97] Iles Brody, "Hot Foods," *Vogue*, July 1, 1947, (75, 84–85), 85.
[98] "*Pond's* Ad," *Vogue*, September 1, 1947, 233.
[99] "Paris Season," *Vogue*, August 15, 1948, (150–3, 189), 151.

In February 1949, the magazine published an opinion piece by Jean Cocteau depicting Romanian-Greek Parisian Countess Anna de Noailles as endowed with "a royal politeness of ear" and a genius for talking."[100] The second page flanked Cocteau's article between two full-page rectangles: an announcement listing the stores selling a Botany costume suit and a Tilda Worsted *crêpe* dress, as shown previously in the issue, and an advertisement for Bien Jolie, creator of the "world's finest corsetry," fashioning the "daring look" as "excitingly feminine."[101] (Fig. 12) American *Vogue* readers have been following the life and legacy of Anna de Noailles since as early as her marriage to Count Mathieu de Noailles in 1897, reported in late 1898 by Comtesse de Champdoce.[102] (Fig. 1)

Romanian Royals remained *en Vogue* even after King Michael's abdication, leading to the Popular Republic of Romania, now under the baton of Jessica Daves[103]. The March 1955 issue featured an interview with Queen Marie's youngest daughter, Princess Ileana, at her Newton, Massachusetts home. The author, Lucile Howard, asserted that despite Princess Ileana's blood ties to European Royals, she lived "an American woman's life, busy with her household and her profession."[104] Howard proceeded to detail the Princess' cooking habits and preferences, complete with recipes.[105] The same month but thirty years later, *Vogue* included a review by Suzanne Hart of Hannah Pakula's biography of Queen Marie[106]. After the tumultuous and excruciatingly costly[107] eight years with Diana Vreeland at the helm[108], *Vogue* was now led by Grace Mirabella[109]. Hart's exclusive interview focused on

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[100] Jean Cocteau, "Best of Talk," *Vogue*, February 15, 1949, (81, 129), 81.

[101] Ibid, 129.

[102] Comtesse de Champdoce, "Paris (From Our Correspondent.)," *Vogue*, September 29, 1898, 202, 206.

[103] Editor-in-chief between 1952 and 1962.

[104] Lucile Howard, "Romania in New England," *Vogue*, March 1, 1955, (82–84), 82.

[105] Ibid, 84.

[106] Hannah Pakula, *The Last Romantic: A Biography of Queen Marie of Roumania* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985).

[107] Miralles, *Glossy*, 141.

[108] Editor-in-chief between 1963 and 1971.

[109] Editor-in-chief between 1971 and 1988.

Pakula's personal journey into writing about Queen Marie.[110] The second page included a coupon for a free sleepwear, loungewear, and sportswear catalog by Eileen West.[111] (Fig. 13)

More recently, in the twenty-first century, in December 2003, American *Vogue* presented a list of the "season's best gift books" by writer, journalist, and translator Leslie Camhi.[112] It included an album dedicated to French photographer Jacques Henri Lartigue[113] and an illustration of Romanian-French model Reneé Perle. As Camhi noted, the book reawakened the interest in Lartigue, inspiring Carolina Herrera's Spring 2004 collection.[114] Its earlier presentation in *Vogue Runway* credited "the languid, light-soaked Riviera photos taken by Jacques-Henri Lartigue at the turn of the last century," but not Perle herself, describing the general feeling of the ready-to-wear collection presentation's feeling was "all blue skies and lavender-scented Mediterranean breezes."[115] Perle reappeared in 2010 when Anna Wintour[116] identified her as a possible inspiration for the June summer look[117]. (Fig. 13) The same year, *Vogue Paris* became *Vogue France* in 2021.[118] Wintour's letter proved that even if Paris seems to have been downgraded on fashion influence, it was still at the heart of *Vogue*'s philosophy. And through Paris, interwar Romanian women perceived as Parisians are still relevant, with *Vogue* continuing to function as a "geographical hub linking the old and new worlds of fashion."[119]

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[110] Suzanne Hart, "Hannah Pakula's Magnificent Obsession/This Real West," *Vogue*, March 1, 1985, (317–320), 317.

[111] Ibid, 320.

[112] Leslie Camhi, "Books: Legends in the Making," *Vogue*, December 2003, 190.

[113] Martine d'Astier, Quentin Bajac, and Alain Sayag, eds, *Lartigue: Album of a Century* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2003).

[114] Camhi, "Books," 190.

[115] Janet Ozzard, "Carolina Herrera Spring 2004 Ready-to-Wear," *Vogue Runway*, September 14, 2014, https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/spring-2004-ready-to-wear/carolina-herrera.

[116] Editor-in-chief since 1988 and Condé Nast Global Chief Content Officer since 2020.

[117] Anna Wintour, "Taking the Long View," *Vogue*, October 2010, 94.

[118] Eugénie Trochu, "Vogue Paris Becomes Vogue France," *Vogue France*, October 26, 2021, https://www.vogue.fr/fashion/article/vogue-paris-becomes-vogue-france-magazine-name-change.

[119] David, "Vogue's New World," 14.

This survival is also aided by fashion photography's evolution from emphasizing material qualities to symbolic visual storytelling, which also deters a "direct commentary (if ever it really could) on the political economy of style as it is manufactured and worn."[120] While contemporary Romanian designers can access the glossy fashion magazine system through creative and commercial channels, interwar Romanian *Parisiennes* can only exist within "the dream" as symbols.

Conclusion

Vogue presented one facet of Romania, no less real than the lived and remembered experience inside its borders. *Vogue,* in essence, irrespective of its original American or foreign editions, presented a highly cosmetized image of the world, Romania included. The Romanians presented in the interwar era and the rare subsequent recalls were not included because they were Romanian. They were fashion icons under their family, social, or professional status. With the three symbolic characters chosen, modern Royalty (Queen Marie), olden Royalty (Marthe Bibesco), and burlesque Royalty (Alice Cocéa), despite its growing upheavals, interwar Romania managed to become a constant presence in a magazine consumed by America – or New York's – social and economic elites. As their images slowly faded from *en vogue* to *en fog*, even the glimmer of recognition of modernity and global impact through culture and fashion of women coming from a faraway, magical land somewhere in Europe dimmed down gradually, in tandem with the old world. While *Vogue* does not shy away from mentioning Romania as an origin point and beloved homeland for these three symbolic characters, they have been included more within the larger group of European royals, nobility, and elites, and in Alice Cocéa's case, specifically Parisian entertainment. The cycles of Romanian representations in magazines like *Vogue* run concomitantly with history. Each aspect and edition deserves academic attention, as demonstrated by the symbolic trio chosen for this presentation.

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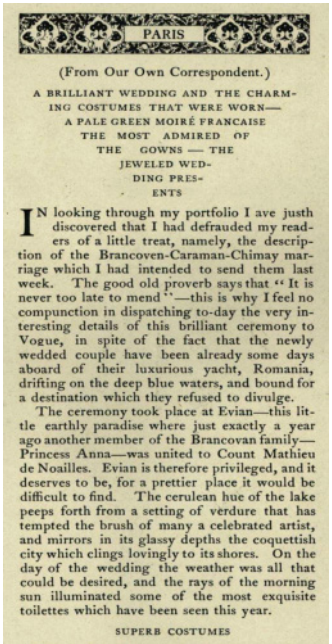
[120] Breward, *Fashion*, 122.

Illustrations

Fireside Studio

Miss Dorothy Norris, the daughter of Mr. Alfred E. Norris, of New York and Philadelphia, was recently married to Lieutenant Raoul Alevra, of Bucharest. The wedding took place at the Norris villa on the cliffs at Narragansett. The bride is wearing a wonderful Chinese pearl head-dress



PARIS

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

A BRILLIANT WEDDING AND THE CHARMING COSTUMES THAT WERE WORN—A PALE GREEN MOIRÉ FRANCAISE THE MOST ADMIRED OF THE GOWNS — THE JEWELED WEDDING PRESENTS

IN looking through my portfolio I ave justh discovered that I had defrauded my readers of a little treat, namely, the description of the Brancoven-Caraman-Chimay marriage which I had intended to send them last week. The good old proverb says that "It is never too late to mend"—this is why I feel no compunction in dispatching to-day the very interesting details of this brilliant ceremony to Vogue, in spite of the fact that the newly wedded couple have been already some days aboard of their luxurious yacht, Romania, drifting on the deep blue waters, and bound for a destination which they refused to divulge.

The ceremony took place at Evian—this little earthly paradise where just exactly a year ago another member of the Brancovan family—Princess Anna—was united to Count Mathieu de Noailles. Evian is therefore privileged, and it deserves to be, for a prettier place it would be difficult to find. The cerulean hue of the lake peeps forth from a setting of verdure that has tempted the brush of many a celebrated artist, and mirrors in its glassy depths the coquettish city which clings lovingly to its shores. On the day of the wedding the weather was all that could be desired, and the rays of the morning sun illuminated some of the most exquisite toilettes which have been seen this year.

SUPERB COSTUMES

Fig. 1. Marriage News. [Above] "The court mantle worn by the Princess was embroidered with the Serbian and Romanian coats of arms. Here royal pair are shown as they left the Cathedral." September 15, 1922, page 75. [Left] November 1, 1920, page 65. [Right] Wedding of Anna de Noailles, fashion report, September 29, 1898, page 202.[121]

[121] All images and captions are taken from the American edition of *Vogue*.

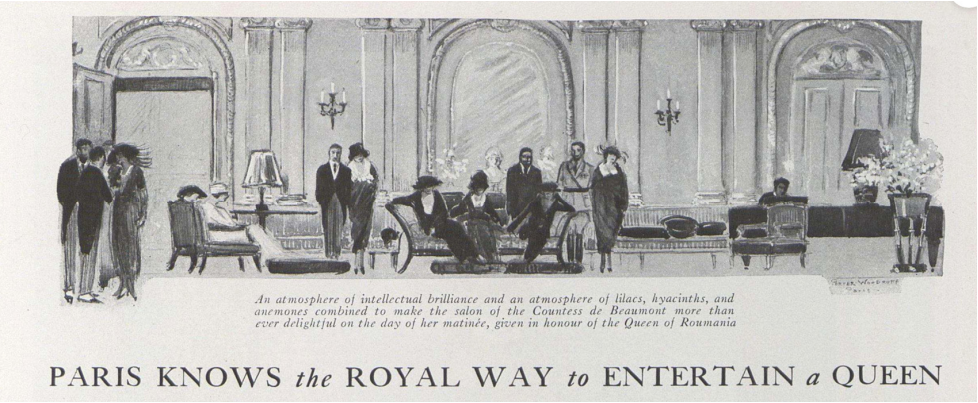


Fig. 2. Jeanne Ramon Fernandez, *Paris Knows the Royal Way to Entertain a Queen*. 15 June 1919, page 36.

Fig. 3. Ads mentioning Queen Marie directly or the Romanian Royal House. [Above] *Houbigant*. December 1, 1922, 16D. [Below] *Parfums Rallet*. 7 December 1929, page 139.

What the most beautiful Queen in Europe says about the care of the skin

"No woman is so highly placed that she can afford to neglect her beauty. Personal appearance is vital to her success—she cannot allow the usual marks of fatigue or exposure to show in her face. I believe that her beauty can be thoroughly guarded by a daily use of Pond's Two Creams."

Marie
Queen of Roumania

POINT to another woman in the world today whose beauty, power and vibrant personality are equal to those of Marie, Queen of Roumania!

"A tall, majestic figure, hair of red-gold, a round white throat, flashing violet eyes and long lashes sweeping demurely the rose-leaf of her lovely cheeks." One who knows her well describes her thus.

Granddaughter of Queen Victoria, cousin to the King of England, to the Queen of Spain and to the late Czar Nicholas of Russia, she has lived from birth in the midst of the great affairs of Europe.

At sixteen she became the bride of the fortunate heir to the Roumanian throne and entered upon the vivid flashing life of the Balkans.

Today no queen in Europe has such influence in state and international affairs. Yet, in spite of her responsibilities in matters of state-craft Queen Marie is still extraordinarily beautiful. Whether she wears the national dress, as she often does when she mingles with the simple peasant folk, or her robes of state and her magnificent crown jewels, she is known as the queenliest queen in Europe, just as her daughters were called the prettiest princesses—before they married kings.

A womanly woman as well as a queen—and one to whom many things have come because of her own beauty—Queen Marie feels that "No woman is so highly placed that she can afford to neglect her beauty. Personal appearance is vital to her success—she cannot allow the usual marks of fatigue or exposure to show in her face."

More and more, women are realizing this—that the woman who is careless of her personal appearance is practically never the woman who is a success. Yet a few thoughtfully chosen toilet preparations and a little regular care every day are all one needs to keep the skin fresh, clear and youthful.

YEARS ago one manufacturer devoted his laboratories to perfecting the two creams that answer the vital needs of the skin. Today the famous Pond's method is used everywhere by women who, because of their high position tax their skins the most and yet must keep them loveliest.

HER MAJESTY, MARIE, QUEEN OF ROUMANIA

A recent portrait by Philip A. de Laszlo, eminent European artist. Queen Marie, a writer of distinction, has done much to foster the Roumanian national arts. She is greatly beloved by her people and is called "the mother-in-law of the Balkans," having married her two eldest daughters to the Kings of Greece and Jugoslavia.

Below a pair of silver boxes from Tiffany and Company, bearing the Queen's crest and filled with Pond's Cold and Vanishing Creams, sent by the Pond's Extract Company as a gift to Her Majesty. They are reproductions of a pair of early American silver boxes made about 1750, now in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Every day, and especially after any exposure, the thorough cleansing that keeps the skin clear and fresh. For this use Pond's Cold Cream. Smooth a generous quantity on your face and neck letting it work deeply into the pores, cleansing them of all impurities. Wipe the cream off with a soft cloth. It will bring with it the excess oil, powder, and dirt your skin has been collecting all day. *Repeat the process.* Now notice how youthful and clear your skin feels—and looks—how smooth and relaxed. Finish by dashing with cold water or rubbing it with ice. If your skin is very dry, use Pond's Cold Cream at night, too, patting it in where wrinkles begin to form. Let it stay on until morning.

And then, to protect your skin and as a foundation for powder, use Pond's Vanishing Cream. Smooth in just a light film, enough for your skin to absorb. Now notice how soft and smooth your skin is to the touch, how lovely to the eye. The delicate greaseless Vanishing Cream protects your skin, so that no amount of wind or sun will roughen it. And you will be delighted with the velvetiness with which your rouge and powder now go on, blend—and stay—for hours!

MOST skins need a Pond's cleansing only once a day, but after exposure of any kind, such as a dusty train trip or a long motor ride, you will find there is nothing more refreshing or relaxing to your skin than a thorough cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream. Finish up, as always, with Pond's Vanishing Cream. It gives you just that last touch of brilliancy and smoothness that—to be absolutely perfect—your complexion requires before you powder!

Take care of your lovely skin. Begin today to follow the method the beautiful Queen of Roumania so heartily recommends. Your beauty like hers, can be, as she says, "thoroughly guarded by a daily use of Pond's Two Creams." Buy your own Pond's Creams in jars or tubes and use them faithfully every day. You will be enchanted to see how quickly your skin looks fresher, more youthful—with a freshness and youthfulness you can *keep*. The Pond's Extract Company.

FREE OFFER—Mail this coupon today for free tubes of these two famous creams and a little folder telling you how to use them and what famous beauties and society leaders think of them.

The Pond's Extract Company, Dept. D
137 Hudson Street, New York.
Please send me your free tubes of Pond's Cold and Vanishing Creams.

Name.....
Street.....
City.....State.....

Fig. 4. What the Most Beautiful Queen in Europe Says about Her Skin. Elaborate Pond's ad. 15 December 1925, page 99.

Fig. 5. Articles about and images of Queen Marie.
[Above Left] Viola M. Jones, *Queen Marie's Playhouse*, November 15, 1926, page 166.
[Above Right] Maria Pavlovna, *Queen Marie of Roumania*, September 1, 1938, 72.
[Below Left] *Roumania the Colourful*, March 15, 1928, page 194.
[Below Right] *H. M. the Queen of Roumania*, June 15, 1924, 30.

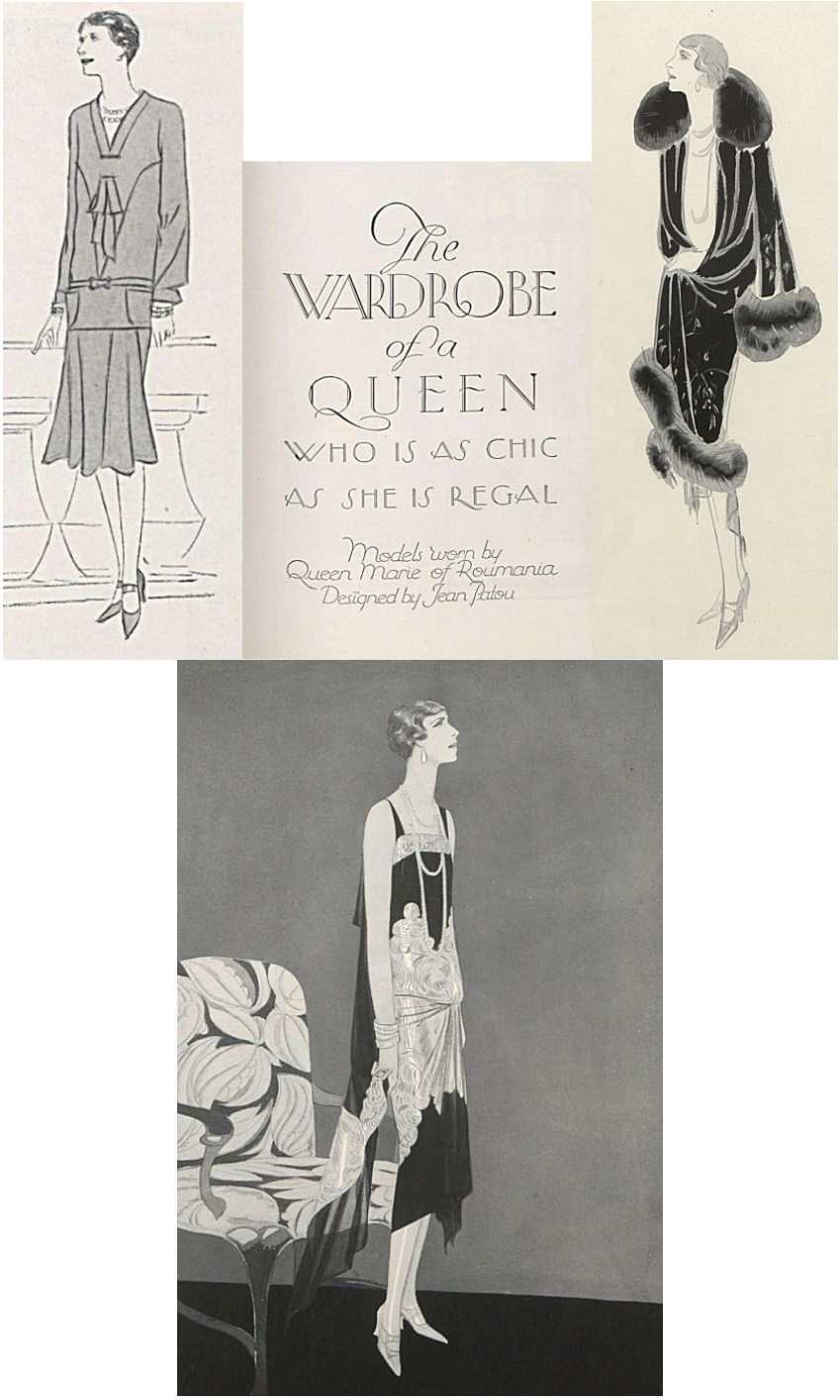
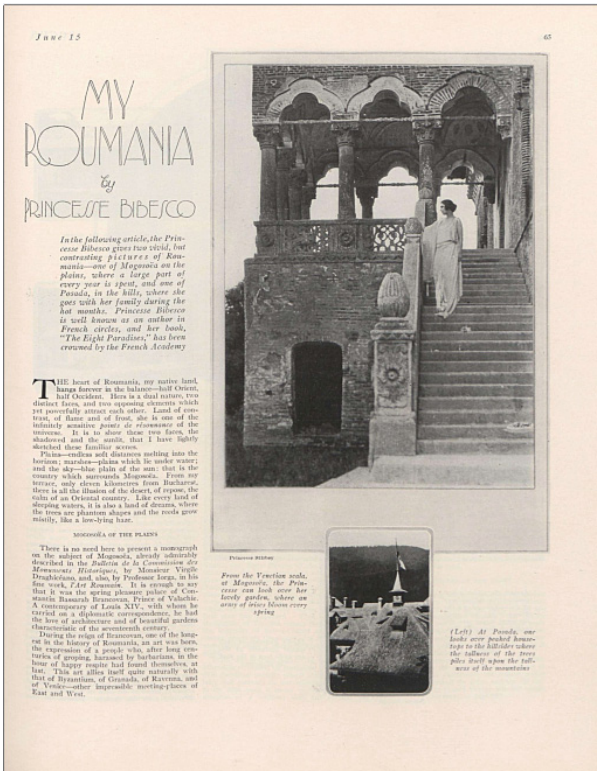


Fig. 6. Queen Marie, fashion icon. *The Wardrobe of a Queen*, December 15, 1926, pages 52–53.



June 15 65

MY ROUMANIA

by

PRINCESSE BIBESCO

In the following article, the Princesse Bibesco gives two vivid, but contrasting pictures of Roumania—one of Mogosoia on the plains, where a large part of every year is spent, and one of Poiana, in the hills, where she goes with her family during the hot months. Princesse Bibesco is well known as an author in French circles, and her book, "The Eight Paradises," has been crowned by the French Academy

THE heart of Roumania, my native land, hangs forever in the balance—half Orient, half Occident. Here is a dual nature, two distinct faces, and two opposing elements which yet powerfully attract each other. Land of contrast, of flame and of frost, she is one of the infinitely sensitive *points de résonnance* of the universe. It is to show these two faces, the shadowed and the sunlit, that I have lightly sketched these familiar scenes.

Plains—endless soft distances melting into the horizon; marshes—plains which lie under water; and the sky—blue plain of the sun: that is the country which surrounds Mogosoia. From my terrace, only eleven kilometres from Bucharest, there is all the illusion of the desert, of repose, the calm of an Oriental country. Like every land of sleeping waters, it is also a land of dreams, where the trees are phantom shapes and the roads grow mistily, like a low-lying haze.

MOGOSOIA OF THE PLAINS

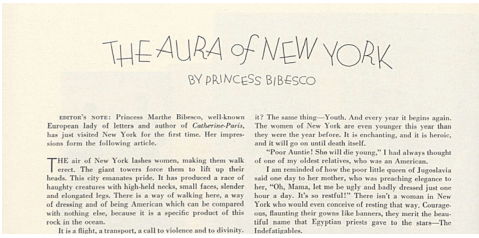
There is no need here to present a monograph on the subject of Mogosoia, already admirably described in the *Bulletin de la Commission des Monuments Historiques*, by Monsieur Vitejlu Draghicéano, and, also, by Professor Iorga, in his fine work, *L'Art Roumain*. It is enough to say that it was the spring pleasure palace of Constantin Bassarab Brancovan, Prince of Valachia. A contemporary of Louis XIV., with whom he carried on a diplomatic correspondence, he had the love of architecture and of beautiful gardens characteristic of the seventeenth century.

During the reign of Brancovan, one of the longest in the history of Roumania, an art was born, the expression of a people who, after long centuries of groping, harassed by barbarians, in the hour of happy respite had found themselves, at last. This art allies itself quite naturally with that of Byzantium, of Granada, of Ravenna, and of Venice—other impressible meeting-places of East and West.

Princesse Bibesco

From the Venetian seats, of Mogosoia, the Princesse can look over her lovely garden, where an array of irises bloom every spring

(Left) At Poiana, one looks over peaked houses to the hillsides where the tallness of the trees piles itself upon the tallness of the mountains



THE AURA of NEW YORK

BY PRINCESS BIBESCO

EDITOR'S NOTE: Princess Marthe Bibesco, well-known European lady of letters and author of *Catherine-Paris*, has just visited New York for the first time. Her impressions form the following article.

THE air of New York lashes women, making them walk erect. The giant towers force them to lift up their heads. This city emanates pride. It has produced a race of haughty creatures with high-held necks, small faces, slender and elongated legs. There is a way of walking here, a way of dressing and of being American which can be compared with nothing else, because it is a specific product of this rock in the ocean.

It is a flight, a transport, a call to violence and to divinity. it? The same thing—Youth. And every year it begins again. The women of New York are even younger this year than they were the year before. It is enchanting, and it is heroic, and it will go on until death itself.

"Poor Auntie! She will die young," I had always thought of one of my oldest relatives, who was an American.

I am reminded of how the poor little queen of Jugoslavia said one day to her mother, who was preaching elegance to her, "Oh, Mama, let me be ugly and badly dressed just one hour a day. It's so restful!" There isn't a woman in New York who would even conceive of resting that way. Courageous, flaunting their gowns like banners, they merit the beautiful name that Egyptian priests gave to the stars—The Indefatigables.

February 1, 1928 69

THE LURE of the OTHER WOMAN'S GOWN

BY PRINCESSE BIBESCO

WHO does not know one, at least, of those odd women who always want just the dress they don't possess, the dress they feel they must have—in a word, the dress that some one else has? In the case of Odette, this is more than an occasional eccentricity, or whim; it is a veritable fault. I might almost say, a defect of character.

Her wardrobes are choked, her clothes-closets full to overflowing. Yet, on the eve of every journey, when her maid begins to pack, she finds herself confronted with an unsolvable problem—how to get the too much into the too little—and rushes to the nearest luggage shop to demand an expanding trunk!

Nevertheless, only yesterday, seeing me appear at her house in a black moiré evening dinner-dress, which was not particularly remarkable, Odette treated me to a fit. I had achieved a most brilliant personal success worthy of praise, and consequently envy. Since I understand her weakness, I tried at once to disguise her with the garment. I said, truly enough, "But you know this dress. It is a model from last season. It has been seen everywhere. You must have had it."

I to conclude? What does she? The certitude that, if we should meet, it is I who would blush for lacking that delicacy that forbids bringing the original and the copy together in the same place.

Odette's husband, who knows her way and tries to excuse instead of correcting it, says to me in confidence, "After all, she might have chosen the same model from X's, where she generally goes. There are no dresses made as single models, to-day."

A TRAGEDY OF TASTES

This is true, but to find this same dress at the dressmaker's is just what Odette is not capable of doing. The only gowns that she orders are those she does not like, and the only gowns she likes she finds on her friends. By not exercising her taste, she ends by having none. With her, this faculty has atrophied. And do not think that her mania is altogether guileless! She begins, at first, by wishing not to meet her best friends, the very ones to whom she can say: "Would you mind lending me your dress?" But, from the moment that the thing is done, it is really better not to see them again.

Fig. 7. Marthe Bibesco's articles in American *Vogue*. [Above] *My Roumania*, June 15, 1925, page 65. [Middle] *The Aura of New York*, January 15, 1935, page 40. [Below] *The Lure of the Other Woman's Gown*, February 1, 1928, page 69.

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PRINCESSE BIBESCO

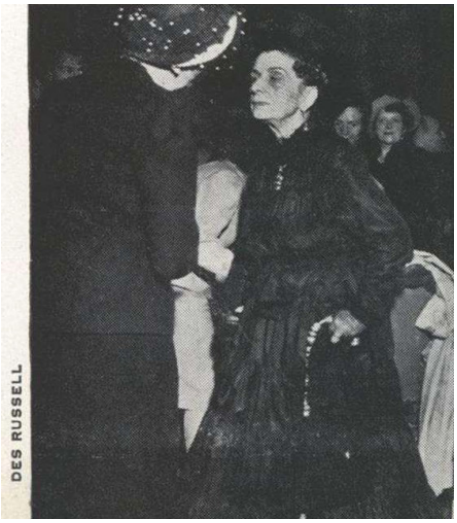
The Princesse Bibesco, who is one of the distinguished women writers of to-day, is well known as the author of "Isvor," "The Green Parrot," and the new "Catherine-Paris." Princesse Bibesco is the wife of Prince Bibesco, who is the head of the Bibesco family. An article by the Princesse appears on the opposite page

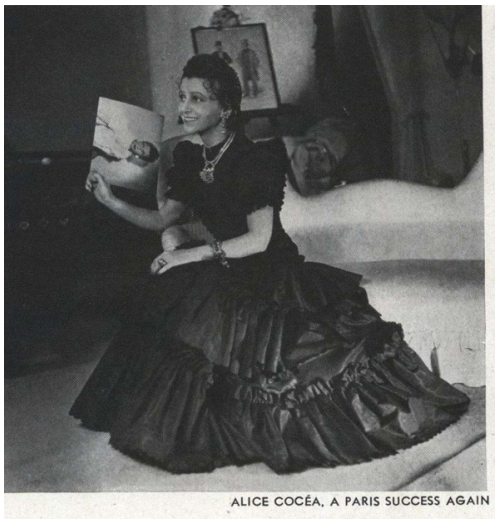
Fig. 8. Marthe Bibesco, fashion icon. [Above Left] February 1, 1928, page 68. [Above Right and Below] Marya Mannes, *Vogue's Eye View of the Mode*, November 1, 1934, page 35.

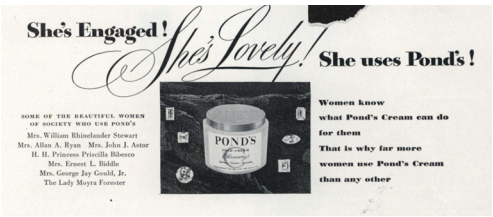
Fig. 9. Alice Cocéa, fashion icon. [Left] *Predictions of Coming Fashions*, February 15, 1922, page 61. [Right] "For Mlle. Alice Cocéa, Callot devised this unusual combination of black and navy blue satin. The blue satin bodice is embroidered in green silk, and long strands of green silk fall over the skirt of black." *Gowns That the Parisienne Is Wearing*, February 1, 1922, page 35.

Fig. 10. "Mme. Nano, wife of the Counselor of the Roumanian Legation." Florence Jaffray Harriman, *Washington*, July 1, 1932, page 24.

Fig. 11. Ads mentioning Bucharest or Romania. [Above and Middle Right] *Goflex*. January 15, 1927, page 9. [Middle Left] *American Export Lines*. March 1, 1933, page 16h. [Below] *Richard Hudnut*. April 1, 1936, page 4.







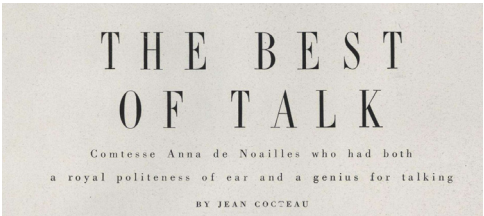


Fig. 12. Romanians in Vogue in the 1940s. [Above left] Princesse Marthe Bibesco at the Ritz Anniversary Reception. Paris Season, August 15, 1948, page 152. [Above Right] *Laughter in London and Paris Theatres*, April 15, 1940, page 53. [Middle] *Uncluttered Black Dresses*, January 1, 1945, page 45. [Below Left] *Pond's*. September 1, 1947, page 233. [Below Right] Jean Cocteau, *Best of Talk*, February 15, 1949, 81.

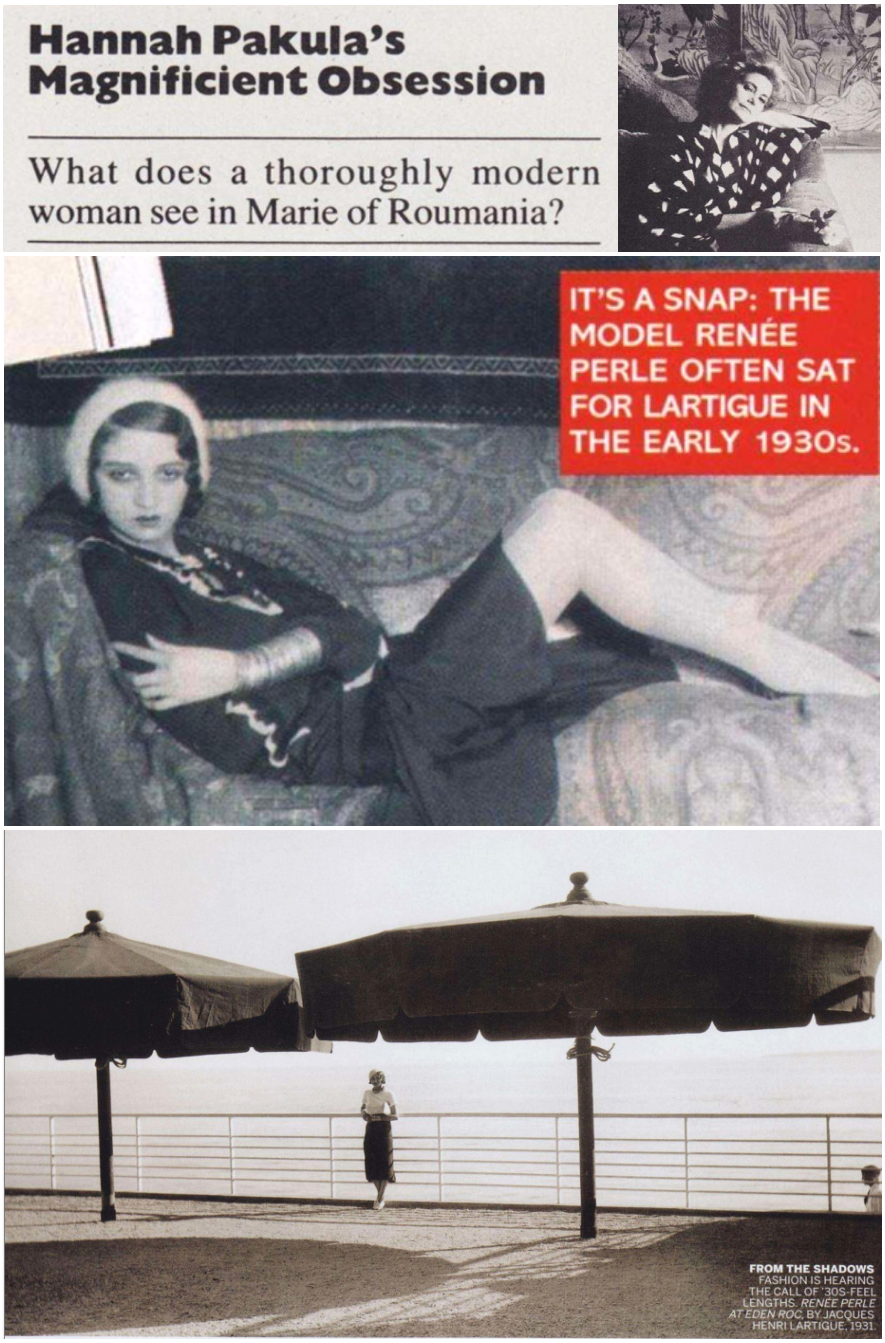


Fig. 13. Romanians in *Vogue* in the twenty-first century. [Above and Second Row] Suzanne Hart, *Hannah Pakula's Magnificent Obsession/This Real West*, March 1, 1985, page 317. [Third Row] Leslie Camhi, *Books: Legends in the Making*, December 2003, page 190. [Below] Anna Wintour, *Taking the Long View*, October 2010, page 94.